



## 200 Greatest Pop Culture Icons



VH1 Music Studio  
Cable in the Classroom

Lesson for Music Classes, Grades 7-12

Lesson 2

Note to Teachers: The programs viewed in conjunction with these lesson plans may include references, consistent with the eras portrayed, to substance abuse, violent acts, and topics of a sexual and/or political nature. Because this may be considered inappropriate for classroom use in some communities, you are encouraged to review the programs before presenting them to your students, and if necessary, choose those sections that enhance your lesson and are acceptable for use in your classroom.

### Objective

- Students will identify elements used by 19th and 20th century composers to convey exoticism.
- Students will compare how 19th and 20th century composers and modern pop icons use exoticism in their compositions.
- Students will compose a short piece using exotic musical elements.

#### National Standards for Music Education

2. Performing on instruments, alone and with others, a varied repertoire of music.
4. Composing and arranging music within specified guidelines.
6. Listening to, analyzing, and describing music.
8. Understanding relationships between music, the other arts, and disciplines outside the arts.
9. Understanding music in relation to history and culture.

## Materials

- VHS VCR Player
- Television
- Audio playback equipment
- VH1's *200 Greatest Pop Culture Icons*
- Web-based lesson materials
- Teacher selected recording of "Habanera" from Georges Bizet's *Carmen*
- The Beatles' album "Sgt. Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band"
- Orff and/or keyboard instruments

### Prior Knowledge:

- Students have completed Lesson 1 of the musical exoticism series.
- Students have experience discussing various types of music.
- Some students have sufficient musical background to create a four-measure composition using Orff and/or keyboard instruments.

## Procedures

1. Have the "Habanera" from Bizet's *Carmen* playing as students enter the room. Once they are settled, ask them if they recognize the piece, and have them identify the cultural influences (Spain). If necessary, tell them the title and composer, and remind them that Bizet was from France, not Spain.
2. Lead students in a discussion of the ways in which the music is an example of exoticism. Draw their attention to the use of ostinato and castanets to evoke the images of Spain. Ask them how it compares to the composition by Sting heard in the previous lesson. Are there similarities in the musical elements used?
3. Suggest to students that modern pop icons were not the first artists to use exotic elements in their music. Explain that many French composers during the 19th and 20th centuries, like Bizet, used exotic musical elements to enhance their compositions. These composers were viewed as musical rebels, and some of their compositions were very controversial; however, their pieces have stood the test of time and have been popular for decades. How does this trait make them similar to modern day pop icons like Sting?
4. Show VH1's *200 Greatest Pop Culture Icons: The Beatles, #12, Episode 5*.
5. Explain to students that the Beatles were very interested in the music of India, and incorporated many of these musical elements into their own songs. Play "With In Without You" from "Sgt. Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band." Have students make mental notes of the exotic elements they recognize, and briefly discuss them as a class.
6. Lead students in a discussion of the similarities between the Beatles and the classical composers of the 19th and 20th centuries. Could the Beatles' use of Indian influences in their music have caused it to be consid-

ered controversial, or at least unusual, at the time? How has their use of new and innovative musical techniques helped their songs to stand the test of time?

7. Divide the class into groups of three or four, pairing students with little music background with those having more musical experience. Explain that each group is going to write a short exotic composition using Orff and/or keyboard instruments. (If using tuned percussion, have each instrument set up in a pentatonic configuration.) The compositions must fulfill the following requirements:
  - 4 measures long in 4/4 time
  - use of a rhythmic ostinato
  - use of pentatonic scale
8. Have each group of students perform their composition for the class.

### National Standards for Music Education

1. Singing, alone and with others, a varied repertoire of music.
2. Performing on instruments, alone and with others, a varied repertoire of music.
3. Improvising melodies, variations, and accompaniments.
4. Composing and arranging music within specified guidelines.
5. Reading and notating music.
6. Listening to, analyzing, and describing music.
7. Evaluating music and music performances.
8. Understanding relationships between music, the other arts, and disciplines outside the arts.
9. Understanding music in relation to history and culture.



These standards-based materials are provided through a partnership with MENC: The National Association for Music Education. This lesson plan was created by MENC member Michelle Barnes, General Music and World Drumming, Fall Creek Valley Middle School, Indianapolis, IN.